In The Claims:

Cancel claim 14 and amend claims 13 and 15-17, as follows:

Claim 1 (cancelled)

Claim 2 (cancelled)

Claim 3 (cancelled)

Claim 4 (cancelled)

Claim 5 (cancelled)

Claim 6 (previously presented)

6. A fiber optic connector system for connecting first and second fiber optic connectors that each includes a connector frame and a plurality of optic fiber termini in the frame, each terminus including a terminus ferrule with a ferrule tip that must abut a ferrule tip of a terminus ferrule of the other connector for the termini to mate, and at least one of said optic connectors includes a plurality of termini compression springs that each biases one of its termini inwardly, wherein the connector system includes a housing and a motherboard structure lying in the housing, comprising:

first and second daughterboards;

first and second mounting brackets each fixed to one of said daughterboards;

first and second bodies, each being slideably mounted in inward and outward longitudinal directions on a corresponding one of said mounting brackets and being spring biased inwardly, and each connector being mounted on one of said bodies;

a pair of guide assemblies, each including a guide pin element and walls

forming a pin-receiving bore element, one element of each guide assembly being mounted on said motherboard structure and the other element of the guide assembly being mounted on the body of each connector assembly;

standoff means for preventing said connectors from moving further towards each other when said ferrule tips of said connectors have abutted one another and said ferrule springs have being partially compressed;

said housing including a pair of daughterboard guides that each guides one of said daughterboards in inward and outward sliding toward and away from the motherboard structure, and a pair of latches that each retains a corresponding daughterboard in a fully inwardly inserted position in the housing, said motherboard structure having at least one opening that allows said terminus ferrules and said standoff means of said first and second connectors to directly engage each other.

Claim 7 (original)

7. The system described in claim 6 wherein:

said standoff means includes a pair of posts fixed against outward movement with respect to each of said bodies and having post inner ends, said motherboard structure having opening areas that allow the post inner ends of posts mounted on the first and second bodies to directly abut one another.

Claim 8 (original)

8. The system described in claim 7 wherein:

said posts are each slideable inward and outward on one of said mounting brackets and have post outer ends that project through holes in said mounting bracket, said posts having shoulders that can abut rear ends of said mounting brackets;

a plurality of compression springs, each lying around one of said posts and biasing a corresponding body inwardly with respect to the mounting bracket;

said posts lie loosely in said holes of said mounting bracket, to enable the

connectors to shift positions perpendicular to said inward and outward directions.

Claim 9 (cancelled)

Claim 10 (cancelled)

Claim 11 (previously presented)

11. A fiber optic connector system which includes a housing having opposite first and second end portions and a midplane lying between said end portions, a motherboard lying on said midplane, first and second daughterboards lying respectively in said first and second housing end portions, each daughterboard being longitudinally slideable inwardly toward said motherboard to a latched position and outward away from said motherboard, and first and second connector assemblies mounted respectively on said first and second daughterboards, said connector assemblies each including a fiber optic connector with at least one terminus that has a terminus tip and that is mateable to the terminus at the other connector by the terminus tips of the mating termini abutting each other, and wherein at least one of said connectors includes a connector frame, a deflectable terminus and a ferrule spring that biases the corresponding deflectable terminus inward while allowing the deflectable terminus to be deflected outward with respect to the frame when the deflectable terminus engages a mating terminus, the deflectable terminus having a tip that preferable lies no further outward than a predetermined maximum outward position relative to the corresponding connector frame when said deflectable terminus engages the mating terminus, and wherein:

said motherboard has at least one hole;

each of said connector assemblies has a pair of standoffs lying on opposite sides of the corresponding connector, each standoff being fixed against outward longitudinal movement with respect to a corresponding one of said connectors, said standoffs having inner standoff tips, the standoff tips of the first and second

connector assemblies being aligned with each other so said tips abut one another when the connectors are fully mated;

said standoff tips being positioned to pass into said motherboard hole and abut one another only after said deflectable terminus has been deflected outwardly, but before said deflectable terminus is deflected outward beyond said predetermined maximum outward position.

Claim 12 (previously presented)

12. The system described in claim 11 wherein:

at least one of said connectors includes a mounting bracket fixed to one of said daughterboards, a body that is slideable inward and outward on said mounting bracket, and a spring that urges the body inwardly, a pair of said standoffs being mounted on said body.

Claim 13 (currently amended)

13. A method for mating pairs of optic termini of first and second optic fiber connectors, wherein the temini of each pair have tips that abut when the pair of termini mate, which includes mounting said first and second connectors each on a mounting bracket of first and second daughterboards, respectively, that lie on opposite sides of a motherboard structure to allow each connector to slide in inward and outward directions on the corresponding mounting bracket, including:

establishing a pair of standoffs that each has an inward end forming a tip, on each of said optic fiber connectors with each standoff fixed with respect to a corresponding one of said connectors;

sliding each daughterboard inwardly until the standoff tips of said standoffs abut one another, said step of establishing said standoffs including positioning each standoff so the standoff tips abut only after said termini tips of all pairs of mating termini have abutted.

Claim 14 (cancelled).

Claim 15 (currently amended)

15. A fiber optic connector system, which includes a housing having opposite first and second end portions and a motherboard structure at a midplane lying between said end portions, first and second daughterboards lying respectively in said first and second housing end portions, each daughterboard being longitudinally slideable inwardly toward said midplane to a latched position and outward away from said midplane, and first and second connector assemblies mounted respectively on said first and second daughterboards, said connector assemblies each including a fiber optic connector with ~~at least one~~ a terminus that has a terminus tip and that is mateable to the other terminus by their terminus tips abutting each other, ~~and~~ wherein ~~at least one~~ a first of said connectors includes a first connector frame and a ferrule spring and a first of said termini, said first of said termini being a deflectable terminus that is slideable longitudinally in said first connector frame, and said ferrule spring ~~that~~ biases ~~the corresponding~~ said deflectable terminus inward while allowing the deflectable terminus to be deflected outward with respect to the frame when the deflectable terminus engages a mating terminus, the terminus tip of the deflectable terminus ~~having a tip that preferable~~ preferably lies no further outward than a predetermined maximum outward position relative to the ~~corresponding~~ first connector frame, and wherein:

each of said connector assemblies has a pair of standoffs lying on opposite sides of the corresponding connector, each standoff being fixed against outward longitudinal movement with respect to one of said connectors, said standoffs having inner standoff tips, the standoff tips of the first and second connector assemblies being aligned with each other so said standoff tips abut one another when the connectors are fully mated;

said standoff tips being positioned to abut one another after said deflectable terminus has been deflected outwardly, but before said deflectable terminus is

deflected outward beyond said predetermined maximum outward position.

Claim 16 (currently amended)

16. A fiber optic connector system which includes a housing having opposite first and second end portions and a midplane motherboard structure lying between said end portions, first and second daughterboards lying respectively in said first and second housing end portions, each daughterboard being longitudinally slideable inwardly toward said midplane to a latched position and outward away from said midplane, and first and second connector assemblies mounted respectively on said first and second daughterboards, said connector assemblies each including a fiber optic connector with at least one terminus that has a terminus tip and that is mateable to the other terminus by their terminus tips abutting each other, and at least one of said connector assemblies including a mounting bracket fixed to the corresponding daughterboard with the corresponding connector being mounted to slide longitudinally on the mounting bracket and being biased inwardly relative to the mounting bracket, wherein:

said mounting bracket includes an outer end forming a pair of mounting bracket holes;

each of said connector assemblies includes a body on which a corresponding one of the connectors is mounted, each body having a pair of post-receiving holes aligned with said mounting bracket holes;

each of said connector assemblies includes a post with an inward part forming a standoff and an outer part extending through one of said post-receiving holes in said body and through a mounting bracket hole in said mounting bracket, and each post having an inwardly-facing shoulder lying outward of a corresponding mounting bracket hole; and including

a pair of coil springs each lying around one of said posts and lying between said body and said mounting bracket outer end to bias the body inward relative to the mounting bracket;

each of said posts being fixed against outward movement relative to a corresponding one of said bodies, and each of said standoffs formed by said post inner ends is positioned to engage a standoff of another of said connector assemblies to limit inward movement of said connectors.

Claim 17 (currently amended)

17. A fiber optic connector system which includes a housing having opposite first and second end portions and a motherboard at a midplane lying between said end portions, first and second daughterboards lying respectively in said first and second housing end portions, each daughterboard being longitudinally slideable inwardly toward said midplane to a latched position and outward away from said midplane, and first and second connector assemblies mounted respectively on said first and second daughterboards, said connector assemblies each including a fiber optic connector with at least one terminus that has a terminus tip and that is mateable to the other terminus by their terminus tips abutting each other, and at least one of said connector assemblies including a mounting bracket fixed to the corresponding daughterboard with the corresponding connector being mounted to slide longitudinally on the mounting bracket and being biased inwardly relative to the mounting bracket, wherein:

each of said connector assemblies includes a body with each connector being mounted on a corresponding body, each body forming a tongue guide and each bracket forming an inwardly-projecting tongue that is slideably positioned in a corresponding tongue guide;

each tongue lying between the corresponding daughterboard and the corresponding connector.

Claim 18 (previously presented)

18. The system described in claim 17 wherein:

each tongue lies loosely in a corresponding tongue guide to purposely allow

body shifting of at least 0.01 inch perpendicular to said inward and outward directions.